

1 8/2/23 - National Grid, NY - 23-G-0225/23-G-0226

2 STATE OF NEW YORK

3 PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

4 CASE 23-G-0225 - Proceeding on Motion of the
5 Commission as to the Rates, Charges, Rules and
6 Regulations of The Brooklyn Union Gas Company
7 d/b/a National Grid NY for Gas Service.

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9 CASE 23-G-0226 - Proceeding on Motion of the
10 Commission as to the Rates, Charges, Rules and
11 Regulations of KeySpan Gas East Corporation d/b/a
12 National Grid for Gas Service.

13 PUBLIC STATEMENT HEARING

14 DATE: August 2, 2023 at 6:02 p.m.

15 VENUE: WebEx

16 BEFORE: A.L.J. MAUREEN LEARY

17 A.L.J. JAMES COSTELLO
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22 Reported by Anthony McClain
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2 (The hearing commenced at 6:02 p.m.)

3 THE REPORTER: Yes, Your Honor. We
4 are on the record.

5 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you. I call Case
6 23-G-0225, Proceeding on Motion of the Commission as
7 to the Rates, Charges, Rules and Regulations of the
8 Brooklyn Union Gas Company, doing business as
9 National Grid, New York, for Gas Service and case 23-
10 G-0226 Proceeding on Motion of the Commission as to
11 the Rates, Charges, Rules and Regulations of KeySpan
12 Gas East Corporation doing business as National Grid
13 for Gas Service. Good evening, everyone. Welcome.
14 We are here this evening for a public statement
15 hearing that was the subject of a June 30th, 2023,
16 notice issued by the Secretary to the Public Service
17 Commission.

18 My name is Maureen Leary. I am an
19 Administrative Law Judge with the Office of Hearings
20 in the Department of Public Service. With me this
21 evening is Administrative Law Judge James Costello.
22 Together, we are responsible for presiding over this
23 and other hearings in these cases and for the
24 development of a complete record of the proceedings.
25 I'm also honored to indicate to you that our Chair of

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2 just echo what the Chair has -- had to say right
3 there, and I would just add that I appreciate
4 everyone who's taken time out to participate in this
5 process. As a -- as an individual Commissioner, I
6 find that a public component to be very helpful in --
7 in my ability to assess the impact of what items that
8 come before us have on real people, as well as I
9 learn a lot from forums such as this. So thank you
10 very much. Other than that, I'm here to listen to
11 you. You're not here to listen to me, so you're not
12 going to hear from me again to -- tonight, but I'm
13 paying very close attention to what you have to say,
14 so thank you very much.

15 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you, Commissioner
16 Maggiore. The Brooklyn Union Gas Company, doing
17 business as National Grid, New York, that I will call
18 KEDNY, and KeySpan Gas East Corporation, doing
19 business as National Grid that I will refer to as
20 KEDLI, Long Island or collectively, the Companies,
21 have filed amendments to their gas tariff schedules.
22 That happened on April 28th, 2023 and they proposed
23 to increase their annual gas delivery revenues
24 effective March 31st, 2024. For KEDNY, the proposal
25 is to increase its revenues by four hundred and

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2 fourteen million dollars, a twenty-eight percent
3 increase in base delivery revenues, or a seventeen
4 percent increase in total revenues. KEDLI proposes
5 to increase its revenues by two hundred and twenty-
6 eight million dollars, representing a twenty-four
7 percent increase in base delivery revenues, or a
8 fourteen percent increase in total revenues.

9 Although the actual bill impacts of
10 these proposed changes on any particular customer may
11 vary upon revenue allocation and rate design as
12 determined by the Commission, the Company states that
13 the typical KEDNY residential heating customer will
14 have approximately a thirty-dollars and ninety-five
15 cent average monthly bill increase.

16 A typical KEDLI customer that is a
17 residential heating customer will have approximately
18 a twenty-eight dollar and fifty-two cents average
19 monthly bill increase.

20 Now, under New York law, known as the
21 Public Service Law, the Public Service Commission
22 must consider a utilities' proposal and may adopt or
23 reject it in whole or in part, or may modify it.
24 Often cases are settled among various parties. The
25 statutory timeframe for consideration of a rate case

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2 is generally about eleven months under the Public
3 Service Law. So let me talk about the Commission a
4 little bit. You've met our Commission chair and one
5 of our Commissioners, thank you both for coming.
6 There are other Commissioners six o -- I'm sorry,
7 five others, and they are Diane Berman, James Alesi,
8 Tracey Edwards, John Howard, and David Valesky.

9 So I will explain the process that
10 we're going to follow this evening. And remember, as
11 as Chair Christian and Commissioner Maggiore stated,
12 the purpose of this hearing is to provide you with an
13 opportunity to tell the Commission your thoughts on
14 the Companies' rate proposals. It is to listen to
15 you. The statements you make today will become a
16 part of the case record. And as you may have
17 noticed, we have a court reporter who will -- who is
18 transcribing the entire proceeding, including your
19 comments, and he will prepare a transcript of this
20 hearing.

21 That transcript will be included in
22 the official record of this proceeding so that your
23 comments can be -- can be considered by members of
24 the Commission. When that transcript is ready, it
25 will be available for review on the Department of

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2 Public Service website. And I want to give you a
3 couple of numbers that you now see on your screen
4 that are very important and will enable you to search
5 that website. Those numbers are 23-G-0225 and 23-G-
6 0226.

7 You can access pretty much either
8 KEDNY or KEDLI's filings under those two numbers
9 depending on which Company you are interested in.

10 Generally speaking, the filings by the
11 Companies are filed in both cases, so searching under
12 one number should be sufficient. Also, importantly,
13 this is not your only opportunity to comment. If you
14 did not register to speak at today's hearing, but
15 you'd like your views to be included in the record
16 there are a variety of other ways to comment that
17 were listed first in the Secretary's June 30th public
18 notice of these hearings. And you specifically can
19 do so, as noted in the -- in that notice, submit your
20 comments by email, regular mail, or by phone or on
21 the Department's website.

22 Regardless of how the comments are
23 submitted, they will be given equal consideration and
24 they may be submitted and will be considered
25 throughout the pendency of this proceeding. If you

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2 have registered to make a statement, please summarize
3 lengthy statements because we have somewhat limited
4 time and your statements can be submitted orally, but
5 you can submit the full written statement, that may
6 be lengthier, by email or mail.

7 Also, I have noticed that our Notice
8 of the public statement hearing sets an August 4th
9 date for submitting comments. This date was chosen
10 so that members of the Department staff as well as
11 other parties and the Companies will have before them
12 your comments in order for them to timely address
13 them if appropriate in their testimony, which will be
14 filed in September. Having said that deadline of
15 August 4th, it's not a real written-in-stone
16 deadline. Comments will be accepted throughout the
17 pendency of this proceeding.

18 So because of the number of speakers
19 we have had in the last couple of days, I'm going to
20 ask the speakers to limit your comments to about
21 three minutes in -- in terms of the timeframe. That
22 way we can hear everybody without losing anyone to
23 other obligations. Here's what I am going to do.
24 First, I'm going to call the folks who are
25 registered. They're either participating

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2 electronically or they're participating by telephone.
3 In either case, you should have only one audio input,
4 one device. Otherwise, you're going to have some
5 feedback and we may not be able to take your comment.
6 If you are participating by phone, you'll hear me
7 repeatedly ask you to press star three. That will
8 allow us to recognize you as the next speaker and
9 unmute your line so that you can deliver your
10 statement.

11 For -- for the people registered
12 electronically, we will identify you on our screens,
13 unmute your line, you should hear a tone. And you'll
14 also see that your microphone icon is no longer red
15 and with a slash through it, you'll have a green
16 microphone.

17 Please make sure that if you have
18 muted your own computer, you may need to unmute that
19 as well for us to hear you. So let me begin. Oh,
20 one further instruction. Once your line is unmuted,
21 please state your name and don't be quick about it.
22 Please, if -- if you are not a registered speaker,
23 you're going to need you to spell your name and I
24 will allow registered speakers at the end, time
25 permitting, to provide comments should they so

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2 desire.

3 But please state your name, spell it
4 if you're not registered, and then speak slowly and
5 clearly so that the court reporter can accurately
6 capture your statement for the record.

7 Okay. I will also advise once I call
8 one speaker, I'm also going to do what I call telling
9 the next speaker that they're on deck, which is a
10 baseball term saying you're next. And I will also
11 indicate to you that your line is unmuted and we can
12 hear you, so you can go ahead with your statement.
13 Okay. My first speaker is Maddie Aracich, Maddie
14 Aracich.

15 MR. WHITE: I -- I don't see that
16 person, but maybe they maybe they called in your
17 Honor and would have to hit star three on their phone
18 so we could see who they are.

19 A.L.J. LEARY: Okay. Let's -- let's
20 see if Maddie Aracich is attending by phone, please
21 press star three on your phone so we could recognize
22 you. Doesn't look like it's anyone. Alright, let's
23 move on. Oh, no. There he is. Matthew Aracich,
24 registered as Maddie, but you see him, Mr. White. He
25 is down at the bottom of the list of attendees. Oh,

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2 he just disappeared.

3 MR. ARACICH: I'm here.

4 A.L.J. LEARY: Oh, there he is. Okay.
5 Go ahead Mr. Aracich. We can hear you.

6 MR. ARACICH: Terrific. Thank you
7 very much. My name is Matthew Aracich. Last name is
8 A-R-A-C-I-C-H. I am the President of the Building
9 and Construction Trades Council for Nassau and
10 Suffolk Counties. The -- the council actually
11 recommends that we approve this rate increase that
12 we're talking about, and the reason is we want to
13 make sure that we get off fossil fuels. And this is
14 a way to make sure that we can begin to really make
15 that transition. So that's why the -- the reference
16 on case number 23-G-0225 is very important. One of
17 the things we're noticing is that by the year 2025,
18 there will be a replacement of the majority of 95
19 percent of the gas lines that are in the streets in
20 Nassau and Suffolk counties, with high density
21 polyethylene. The reason that's important is we're -
22 - if we're looking to continue to use natural gas,
23 both for efficiency and for emission purposes, it
24 also gives us a transition to get into a hydrogen
25 footprint.

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2 Hydrogen is actually the case that
3 they're actually using over at Lido Beach, and
4 National Grid has made a -- a motion that they are
5 making sure that they utilize this so they can
6 address the emissions on 800 homes in the South
7 Shore, and that's only the beginning. So with all
8 this, we also need the -- the training involved for
9 all the members of Local 1049 and then all of the
10 ancillary work with energy infrastructure that is
11 extremely important in moving to a zero-carbon
12 footprint. So that's why the building trade is so
13 supportive of this. Yes, we are members of the
14 community. Yes, we realize that we are going to have
15 rate increases for ourselves. However, we also
16 realize that by investing in this, we are also
17 investing in local economies because that economy is
18 actually the county and the state. And by having
19 local contractors there, it helps raise the funds to
20 make sure all of this is paid for. Thank you very
21 much. And if you want safe electric and is -- safe
22 electric and safe gas, it's -- it's important that we
23 support Long Island's Energy Group. So thank you.

24 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you, Mr. Aracich.
25 Okay. I violated my own instruction by not giving

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2 you the on-deck person, I apologize. So ne -- our
3 next speaker is Alba Meang, M-E-A-N-G, and on deck is
4 Gigi Nieson. Alba Meang, if you are a call-in user
5 by telephone, please press star three, so we can
6 identify you. Not seeing anything. Okay. Gigi
7 Nieson. Gigi Nieson. Again, press star three if
8 you're a call-in user. Okay. Kier Blake. Kier
9 Blake. Call-in user, no? Star three if you are a
10 call-in user.

11 MR. WHITE: No raised hands, Your
12 Honor.

13 A.L.J. LEARY: Okay. Miriam
14 Bluestone. Miriam Bluestone. I don't see her
15 either. Lynn Tondrick, Lynn Tondrick. Everyone, I
16 will go back and repeat these names later in case you
17 are actually on the line. Laurie Wheelock, I do see
18 you, Ms. Wheelock, your line is unmuted. Go ahead.

19 MS. WHEELLOCK: Good evening,
20 Administrative Law Judges, Leary and Costello, Chair
21 Christian and Commissioner Maggiori. My name is
22 Laurie Wheelock, I'm the Executive Director and
23 Counsel for the Public Utility Law Project. We go by
24 PULP for short, and I go by the pronoun, she/hers.
25 PULP is a 40-year-old nonprofit with the mission of

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2 educating, advocating, and litigating on behalf of
3 New York's low-income utility customers. PULP thanks
4 the Department of Public Service for the opportunity
5 to testify tonight in relation to KEDNY and KEDLI's
6 gas rate cases. We are an active party in both cases
7 and do plan to file expert testimony on September
8 1st. Tonight though, I want to address several
9 concerns we have that will be expanded upon in our
10 written testimony. Yesterday, my colleague Andrew
11 Sevedra (phonetic spelling) testified in relation to
12 some affordability concerns we have with the greater
13 financial pressures that people are feeling at this
14 time.

15 But tonight, I want to dive a little
16 bit deeper as PULP believes that we need to really
17 consider the cumulative effects and think creatively
18 about how to keep costs as low as possible. First
19 and foremost, we want to recommend that during the
20 pendency of the rate case, that the monthly
21 collection activity reports filed in 91-M-0744, be
22 reviewed on a regular basis. This helps show how the
23 customers' financial health is doing. And for
24 instance, in June 2023, over 56,000 KEDLI accounts
25 and over 197,000 KEDNY accounts were behind on their

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2 bills by 60 days or more. We think it's an important
3 backdrop as the Companies are now proposing this
4 double digit rate increase. In truth cases like this
5 are becoming very difficult for parties like PULP.
6 As we understand the need and the balance for safe
7 and reliable service at just and reasonable rates, we
8 feel that the just and reasonable rates need to be
9 strictly scrutinized more than ever.

10 The large rates being requested are
11 simply unaffordable to many low fixed and even
12 moderate-income households. And so we have to think
13 creatively and really dig deep and reconsider every
14 traditional aspect of a rate case. So some of the
15 aspects we wanted to encourage were increased energy
16 efficiency programming to help people lower their
17 usage, as well as more direct outreach to customers
18 explaining how they can take steps today to lower
19 their usage. We also want to encourage more
20 enrollment in the energy affordability program, which
21 is a success for families and households who are
22 enrolled in the monthly discount program. Also,
23 considering whether or not we can freeze or even roll
24 back fixed rates, which we see as regressive, in
25 particular for low-income households. Another aspect

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2 that we think is an opportunity for deep review is
3 the return on equity. Finding a way to make sure
4 that yes, while a reasonable rate of return is
5 possible, that also that the ret -- return on equity
6 is reviewed and kept as strict as possible so that it
7 helps cut costs.

8 And just because one utility is
9 approved at a 9.25 percent return on equity, doesn't
10 mean that another utility should receive that same
11 ROE. Also, work in inside the rate case to help keep
12 the length of the rate cases themselves to the 11-
13 month statutory period, while limiting the mid coal
14 provision is something that's really important to
15 PULP. And another aspect we wanted to flag is the
16 site investigation and remediation cost, also known
17 as SIRC. We need to reevaluate the way we handle
18 environmental costs due to projects like the Newtown
19 Creek and the Gowanus Superfund sites where
20 escalating environmental costs are one of the many
21 rate drivers that KEDNY has pointed to when it comes
22 to the proposed revenue requirements.

23 So, PULP, again, thanks the commission
24 and the department for having these hearings tonight.
25 We look forward to submitting our testimony on

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2 September 1st and working hard in this rate case so
3 that low income, moderate fixed income households can
4 pay their bills and keep their service on. Thank
5 you.

6 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you, Ms.
7 Wheelock. Let me go back and see Mary Finneran, are
8 you on the line? Now if you are calling in on
9 someone else's computer, which happened this
10 afternoon, there is a raised hand function at the
11 lower part of your screen. So if that's the case,
12 please just hit that raised hand function and that
13 will appear, so the name that we're seeing on our
14 screen we'll identify you as the person who's going
15 to -- or a separate person who's next going to give a
16 comment. So Fred Harrison. Mr. Harrison? Not
17 seeing Mr. Harrison. Margot Spindelman? Also a
18 registered user. Okay. Let me go back and see if
19 anyone has -- who has registered has come into the
20 meeting. Alba Meang? Gigi Nieson? Kier Blake?

21 MR. WHITE: We have a raised hand,
22 Your Honor.

23 A.L.J. LEARY: Okay. That call-in
24 user, would you unmute and let's see if we can
25 identify who that is.

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2 MR. WHITE: Sure. Go ahead.

3 A.L.J. LEARY: Go ahead. We can hear
4 you or we did hear you for a moment.

5 MR. MAQUE: Okay. My name is Jack
6 Maque. I had registered for the 1:00 p.m. session,
7 but I listened, my name was not called, but I did get
8 a call back from one of your staff people saying they
9 tried to get me in. I didn't hear my name called
10 today either. My name is Jack Maque. I live in
11 Baldwin, and I would like to comment that according
12 to published and public data, natural gas prices have
13 fallen over the past year to one third of its cost.
14 An online chart documenting its decline can be found
15 at www.macrotrends.net. That's M-A-C-R-O-T-R-E-N-D-S
16 dot net. With this fact taken into consideration,
17 National Grid should be offering a decrease in
18 charges, not seeking an increase. Please don't
19 approve their request for an increase. Furthermore,
20 the amount that was previously mentioned as an
21 anticipated increase for the average Long Island
22 customer of \$28 and 52 cents per month, was actually
23 listed in today's Newsday on page e -- eight, more
24 likely to be \$34.66 cents per month, which would mean
25 an over \$400 per customer annual increase. This is

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2 too much. I'm in favor of keeping gas service on
3 Long Island, but I'm not in favor of granting
4 National Grid a luxurious price increase to provide
5 that service. Please take a look at the numbers.
6 Thank you.

7 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you, Mr. Maque.
8 And having been on the one o'clock call, I'm not sure
9 what happened, but we appreciate your comment and
10 your patience as well as your participation this
11 evening. Okay, I have another call-in hand, or is
12 that this -- oh, no. GiGi Nieson? Let me see if we
13 can unmute your line. Yep, you are unmuted, go
14 ahead. Actually, Mr. White, I'm not seeing a green
15 microphone for some reason. Ms. Nieson, I think --

16 MS. NIESON: Hello?

17 A.L.J. LEARY: Yes. Now --.

18 MR. WHITE: She's unmuted, Your Honor.

19 A.L.J. LEARY: Okay -- okay --.

20 MS. NIESON: Yeah. Good evening. My
21 name is GiGi Nieson. I live in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn.
22 I'm here at this hearing to, you know, reject
23 National Grid's proposals to spend these billions of
24 dollars to put in more fracked gas infrastructure,
25 you know, millions more on reinforcements to fracked

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2 gas infrastructure across Brooklyn and Queens. And
3 say no to this rate hike to pay for all these
4 projects. You know, when I think of the future and a
5 future that I want for myself and my neighbors to
6 live in, I think of one where we don't have to worry
7 about pollution-related health hazards, where there's
8 free clean energy, and most importantly, a livable
9 planet. Last year, you know, my partner had a tumor
10 the size of a golf ball. She's still paying back
11 those medical bills to this day, for those repeated
12 surgeries. With, you know, rising rent and costs, a
13 rate hike will certainly be a problem for us in the
14 future.

15 And, you know, we know the science
16 behind how the proximity to fossil fuel
17 infrastructure increases those health risks, asthma
18 and cancer. And this is especially concerning to me.
19 When we think of gas leaks and accidents, it's never
20 if. It is when is it going to happen? And when the
21 climate -- and with climate science being so clear
22 that, you know, these wildfires and incredible storms
23 that we're experiencing, these heat waves, you know,
24 it's so clear and it's so evident that National Grid
25 should be taking steps to reduce gas usage -- usage

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2 and look for other solutions such as thermal energy.
3 Now, I won't be gaslight into thinking these projects
4 are beneficial for me or my neighbors. National
5 Grid's not a positive force in the community, and
6 they've already stolen so much and extracted so much
7 from us. Thank you.

8 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you, Ms. Nieson.
9 Okay, let me just, again, address the call-in users
10 because there are a couple of people here that are
11 not -- either not present or not able to be
12 identified. Alba Meang, Mary Finneran, Kier Blake,
13 Mimi Bluestone, Lynn Tondrick, Margot Spi --
14 Spindelman. Anybody? Okay. Let me -- oh -- oh,
15 let's see. Kier Blake, excellent. You are unmuted.
16 Go ahead with your statement.

17 MS. BLAKE: Oh, hello.

18 A.L.J. LEARY: Hi. Go ahead. We can
19 hear you.

20 MS. BLAKE: Perfect. So hello, my
21 name is Kier Blake. I use they/them pronouns, and
22 I'm the co-founder and the Director of community and
23 school partnerships at Star Empowerment, which has
24 reached over 3,500 students and over 405 -- 4,500
25 members to date and counting. We seek to educate

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2 communities on environmental justice issues such as
3 around the -- these pipelines and these
4 reinforcements such as the one that National Grid is
5 proposing. As a member of the community in the
6 Flatbush neighborhood, National Grid's desire to
7 spend \$850,000 to reinforce the Flatbush gas gate
8 station is pretty ludicrous. As a member that has
9 already gone through kind of the trauma and also the
10 confusion of seeing like the streets being dug up,
11 and then not knowing that an active pipeline filled
12 with fracked gas was being input in my neighborhood,
13 was going in in the first place, with only just a
14 couple years ago, and now then realizing that also
15 there's further expansions going into Q Gardens,
16 Belmont, Jamaica, and Corona, connecting customers
17 for 467.5 million, is even more alarming.

18 It's very telling the fact that we
19 have to essentially see the continued expansion as
20 everyone has been mentioning, of these pipelines when
21 we're trying to move towards a climate positive
22 future, one in which we don't see the increased use
23 of fossil fuels. Furthermore, I would also like to
24 say we were a part of -- and I'm a current and proud
25 member of the New North Brooklyn Pipeline Alliance,

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2 that has stopped phases five and also the vaporizers,
3 towards the end of the pipeline. And I will say from
4 that experience, just learning how much, you know,
5 our voices and -- and how much us speaking up really
6 matters. And also just wanted to say that, you know,
7 the turnaround period for this hearing was very --
8 very, like, rushed, it felt like. I didn't have
9 enough time to alert my community members, and it
10 kind of felt the same way that it felt all those
11 years back when we didn't even know that there was a
12 pipeline going in and yet didn't even have the time
13 to organize or call for a public or in-person
14 hearing.

15 And so I just wanted to just express a
16 lot of deep disappointment in the fact that if this
17 does go through, that there will be a lot of
18 community harms that continue to happen, already in
19 environmental justice areas, already in areas that
20 are facing food insecurity, already in areas that,
21 you know, were hit really hard with the air quality
22 alerts, and everything with the wildfires in Canada.

23 And it still is going through with a
24 lot of needs for mutual aid and things from the
25 pandemic. So thank you for listening and I really

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2 urge you to make the right choice in accordance with
3 everyone here, in terms of saying no to these
4 increases and these reinforcements. Thank you.

5 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you, Ms. Nieson.
6 Let's see. I can open up the floor at this point.
7 If I have already called your name and you have not
8 yet given your statement, please raise your hand. If
9 I have already called your name. Okay.

10 MR. WHITE: Kim Fraczek has her hand
11 up, Your Honor.

12 A.L.J. LEARY: She -- her name was not
13 called, but I will go to that next. So let me open
14 up the floor. Are there others on part in -- in our
15 attendee group that wish to provide a statement? Ms.
16 Fraczek, I see you and I see Ms. Leidecker, and Ms.
17 Chamberlain, so if you want to provide a statement at
18 this time, please raise your hand, I will call you.
19 Ms. Fraczek, we're going to unmute your line and give
20 you an opportunity to be heard. Okay. We did Erika
21 Chamberlain instead, but --.

22 MS. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, you unmuted
23 Erika Chamberlain, that's me.

24 A.L.J. LEARY: Hold on a second.
25 Let's take -- take one at a time. Can we go back to

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2 Ms. Fraczek?

3 MS. FRACZEK: You can -- you can go to
4 -- go -- go to Erika first, because --.

5 A.L.J. LEARY: No, you're unmuted.
6 We're going with you first.

7 MS. FRACZEK: All right. Okay. Thank
8 you so much. Thank you for hearing the public
9 tonight. My name is Kim Fraczek and I'm the Director
10 of Sane Energy Project in Brooklyn, New York. I'm an
11 intervener in this proceeding and I will be spending
12 every minute over the next month writing our expert
13 testimony about why you should 100 percent reject any
14 rate hike for National Grid's fossil fuel proposal.
15 National Grid should not get one penny more from New
16 Yorkers unless it is investing in thermal energy
17 networks, heat pumps, and energy efficiency to lower
18 our bills and our climate impact and train our unions
19 to work in the 21st century, not the 19th century.
20 Tonight, I'm not speaking as the Director of Sane
21 Energy Project, but I'm going to speak as a resident
22 who lives within the mile radius of a toxic and
23 decaying liquified fracked gas facility, otherwise
24 known as the Greenpoint Energy Center at 287 Maspeth
25 Avenue, that they are asking for \$447 million over

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2 the next four years.

3 This facility must be retired with a
4 clear milestone plan in this rate case, not spend any
5 more money propping up some of the most toxic land in
6 our entire nation. I've mentioned in several public
7 hearings before that I grew up in Pennsylvania and
8 the water reservoir I grew up on is poisoned because
9 of fracking infrastructure. And I know people that
10 can't bathe their children and drink the water that
11 comes out of their tap because of the industry that
12 we are here opposing tonight in the forum called
13 National Grid. You have a moral responsibility to
14 us. I appeal to the Department of Public Service and
15 the Public Service Commission to do the difficult job
16 in this rate case of being conscientious objectors.

17 In the past, where we can con -- in
18 the past the time where we can continue to say that
19 extending and expanding a fossil fuel system is help
20 -- is helping curb greenhouse gas emissions, because
21 these giant corporations have the resources to strike
22 the public in multiple ways through disinformation,
23 confusion, bribery, and debt. We just lost billions
24 of dollars because you approved the 2022 Con Ed rate
25 case, and we did lose billions of dollars in the 2019

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2 rate case, and we would have lost more if it wasn't
3 for small organizations like Sane Energy Project
4 doing our best to participate in this process without
5 having armies of staff and lawyers, and insisting
6 that we have an independent consultant cross-checking
7 what the corporate utility is telling you.

8 And you only did it because we
9 organized such a vast and diverse movement that
10 shined a spotlight on what decision you were going to
11 make. The DEC was going to shoo it through until
12 Sane Energy threw a wrench in the machine with a pro
13 bono lawsuit. And now National Grid has an
14 opportunity to build a perfect pilot project at
15 Vandalia Houses, a NYCHA complex in East New York.
16 And here they are proposing a flubbed proposal on
17 purpose. Have you had a look at it? Sane Energy had
18 to retain Eg Geothermal in order to do a peer
19 reviewed study and make recommendations because we
20 cannot afford to screw up a renewable pilot project,
21 and we will not allow National Grid to get away with
22 this so they can continue their fossil fuel empire.
23 In stories throughout human history, there is always
24 a wealthy power that can manipulate the public and
25 the government to ensure more power for themselves.

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2 However, we're not in a Hollywood movie, and this is
3 not a Marvel comic book, yet, we're dealing with some
4 of the most evil practices on this earth today. We
5 heard from people in the last three hearings who
6 worked for National Grid, who contract with National
7 Grid in their unions and who get money from National
8 Grid for their under-resourced community groups.

9 We love our neighbors. We love rank
10 and file employees, we love unions. We -- National
11 Grid profits when we are all divided. National Grid
12 is doing nothing but containing these groups with
13 their vast resources that come from our wallets in a
14 stranglehold, so we cannot grow into the 21st century
15 and get out of the 19th century technology that is
16 rapidly creating a planet that can no longer sustain
17 life. The rapidity of extinction that is happening
18 on our planet is affecting every single one of us.
19 Fires, floods, clean water shortages like we all just
20 experienced, and food shortages, which al -- already
21 happened to many regions in the world. Let's not
22 think for a second that this is not coming to the
23 region we live in called New York, because it is a
24 guarantee that everyday climate crisis will be our
25 new norm, if we continue to allow a corporation like

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2 National Grid to dupe the public and our system of
3 governance into thinking that we need them.

4 As we saw during the COVID pandemic,
5 it will always be our most vulnerable populations
6 that will suffer first. That is because of the
7 system that we have set up, and that is why I am
8 asking you all to be conscientious objectors and make
9 history. One of the early testimonies from Habitat
10 for Humanity mentioned how National Grid works to
11 make bills affordable, but it wasn't National Grid
12 that did the work. It was Alliance for a Green
13 Economy, WE ACT for environmental justice and
14 communities for local power that intervened in the
15 energy affordability proceeding in order to make
16 those affordable options happen for New Yorkers. So
17 how dare National Grid take credit for the tireless
18 work of a few activists who happened to figure out
19 that the Department of Public Service is where these
20 decisions get made. Please follow our climate law
21 and our law and moral authority and deny National
22 Grid's proposal. Thank you.

23 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you. Okay.
24 Let's go to Erika Chamberlain. Ms. Chamberlain,
25 you're unmuted. Please provide your statement.

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2 MS. CHAMBERLAIN: Thank you. My name
3 is Erika Chamberlain and I happen to live in
4 Greenpoint, Brooklyn. I emphatically vote no on
5 extending the life of the Greenpoint Energy Center.
6 Spending \$447 million on this decrepit facility that
7 should be retired is stupid to say the least. That
8 money should be used to building thermal energy
9 networks and expanding energy efficiency. This plan
10 that they have is counter to New York law. I would
11 like to say that I lived through Hurricane Sandy.
12 That right there should have been a wakeup call. I
13 couldn't even get to work for three weeks because of
14 the flooding on the G Line in the subway was insane.
15 Then we had nor'easters, right? And now this summer,
16 living through the Canadian wildfires, which are
17 still burning. They're now sending their smoke down
18 to the, you know, the middle of the country.

19 I had -- I mean, I had a hard time
20 breathing, so all of these things are related to each
21 other. We just cannot continue to do these things
22 with some imp -- with -- with this idea of impunity.
23 We live on this planet. New York City is a city that
24 is surrounded by water. There is flooding, there is
25 crazy thunderstorms, then there's scorching heat. We

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2 have got to go in the right direction now. It is way
3 past time. And I see absolutely no reason why
4 National Grid or any of the other monikers that they
5 go under should get a penny more. They should really
6 step into the present now, get on the ball and invest
7 in real green energy. There will be plenty of jobs
8 for everyone because Lord knows we are way behind in
9 infrastructure. So again, I -- I vote you to vote,
10 no. Thank you very much for your time. Appreciate
11 it.

12 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you, Ms.
13 Chamberlain. Okay, let's go to Ms. Leidecker. Jodie
14 Leidecker. We're just going to unmute your line.

15 MS. LEIDECKER: Can you hear me?

16 A.L.J. LEARY: Yes. Go ahead and make
17 your statement. Ms. Chamberlain's line needs to be
18 muted.

19 MS. LEIDECKER: Thank you. My name is
20 Jodie Leidecker, as you said, and I live probably
21 about 10 to 15 steps away from a National Grid
22 Pipeline. And I can't really explain to anyone on
23 this call what it's like to live in fear every day.
24 We all know that a pipeline explodes somewhere in the
25 country every four days. Pipelines leak, and that's

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2 one of the big problems with these methane
3 transmission lines is that they're constantly
4 leaking. So I don't think I can explain to anyone
5 here what it's like to live in fear like this, to not
6 know what the future holds. And I know we've all
7 seen these videos of these pipelines and the risks
8 they pose to people. I don't think anybody here
9 would want that risk so close to their homes and
10 their families. So it's disappointing that the
11 Public Service Commission, and that's supposed to,
12 you know -- it's whose mission is stated to provide
13 just affordable and healthy climate for New Yorkers,
14 is considering further fracked gas infrastructure.

15 I doubt anyone who's going to be
16 living next to this extended infrastructure would
17 welcome it. So I want to just say, reject the
18 proposal to spend nearly \$4 billion on this frack --
19 fracked gas infrastructure, and I vote no to spending
20 any -- another of my -- a penny of my money or my
21 neighbor's money, to connect more fracked gas
22 infrastructure up. We need to reject a new pipeline
23 and any meter or regulating station that goes with
24 it. I don't want to extend the life of the fracked
25 gas infrastructure reinforcements throughout Queens,

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2 Corona, Jamaica and Long Island. It's counter to New
3 York law. And I vote no to spending 2 billion to
4 extend the life of the fracked gas pipelines
5 throughout the National Grid's Lead prone pipe
6 program that's also countered in New York law. And I
7 vote no on extending the life of the Greenpoint
8 Energy Center. I vote yes on investing in clean,
9 green, safer energy, thermal energy networks, and
10 energy efficiency, so we can meet our state's climate
11 goals and actually be a leader in climate action.
12 Thank you.

13 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you, Ms.
14 Leidecker. Okay, that is bringing us close to the
15 end of our hearing. I want to open up again and ask
16 the participants if there's anyone else who would
17 like to provide a public statement. Okay. Ms.
18 Hollow, Tamsin Hollo.

19 MS. HOLLO: Hi, that was quick. Did
20 you want me to speak straight away?

21 A.L.J. LEARY: You -- if you're ready,
22 feel free.

23 MS. HOLLO: I'm ready. Thank you. My
24 name's Tamsin Hollo. I'm calling from Newburgh Clean
25 Water Project, representing about 900 members in the

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2 Hudson Valley. First of all, thanks so much for
3 holding these hearings at such short notice. I'm
4 sure that there will be many more people writing in
5 in the future. I'm attending from Newburgh in the
6 Hudson Valley, so my rates won't be affected by this
7 proposed rate rise, but I'm attending tonight because
8 I'm -- I'm really alarmed by this proposal to spend
9 nearly \$4 billion shoring up a -- a dying and
10 dangerous industry in a time of climate crisis. Here
11 in the Hudson Valley, we've been hit with monsoon
12 style rains throughout July. Our commuter routes
13 throughout the region have been washed out.

14 My 90-year-old mother, who lives for
15 her daily walk, you know, I've had to tell her
16 throughout the last month that we simply can't leave
17 the house because of smoke pollution sparked by the
18 climate crisis. So it's clear that the effects of --
19 of climate change don't respect city and county
20 boundaries. So I'm asking you to please deny this --
21 this massive gas infrastructure build up. It's not
22 necessary, it's dangerous, and it prolongs our
23 reliance on polluting greenhouse gases, affecting not
24 only those in New York City and Long Island, but all
25 of us in New York State and obviously far beyond. So

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2 please vote no and -- and let's meet our -- our
3 climate goals together. Thank you.

4 A.L.J. LEARY: Thank you. Okay,
5 anyone else, please press star 3 if you're a call-in
6 user or you may raise your hand on your computer. On
7 that lower toolbar, you'll see a hand icon. Not
8 seeing anyone. Thank you so much everyone for
9 attending, and many thanks to Chair Christian and
10 Commissioner Maggiori. I want to remind all the
11 members of the public that you may submit public
12 comments throughout the proceeding by the means I
13 previously described. And I want to also indicate
14 that we will be holding in-person public statement
15 hearings probably this fall.

16 MR. WHITE: Your Honor, we -- we have
17 a raised hand. I don't know if you wanted to
18 continue with --.

19 A.L.J. LEARY: Oh, sure. Absolutely.
20 Mr. Alexander, we are going to unmute your line.
21 Okay, go ahead. You can provide your statement. Mr.
22 Alexander, I am not hearing you. I -- I think that
23 was a mistake. Mr. Alexander, see if you have muted
24 yourself and then -- because you are unmuted on our
25 end. Okay. I -- I don't hear him, Mr. White, so I

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2 think we're just going to move on. Try again. You
3 want to try to unmute him again?

4 MR. WHITE: I unlowered the -- I
5 unlowered his hand -- his hand. If he raises his
6 hand again, I -- I will unmute.

7 A.L.J. LEARY: Okay, great. So in --
8 in closing we are going to have additional in-person
9 public statement hearings this Fall. We don't have
10 dates yet, but generally we have them one in the
11 afternoon and one in the evening at different
12 locations, so you will receive notification of those
13 hearings and we will make every effort, Judge
14 Costello and I, with the support of the Commission,
15 to provide adequate notice.

16 There's some dispute about the notice
17 in -- in this case for these public statement
18 hearings and what occurred, but we -- we are hearing
19 you. We will pay some attention to that of course.
20 And rest assured that you'll have adequate notice.
21 Judge Costello, and I want to thank all of the
22 commenters for their participation. And I know we
23 speak on behalf of the Commissioners and the Chair to
24 acknowledge you for being present. And many thanks
25 to our Consumer Services Office, Mr. White, Ms.

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2 Kailas, for assisting us this evening, and Mr.
3 McClain, our Court Reporter, many thanks. Unless
4 there is anything further, feel free Mr. White, if
5 you have anything further for me -- excellent, okay.

6 MR. WHITE: We can close here. We can
7 close down, Your Honor. We'll stop sharing on
8 YouTube now.

9 A.L.J. LEARY: Excellent. And thank
10 you everyone and have a wonderful night. We are off
11 the record, thank you.

12 MR. WHITE: We are off the record,
13 your Honor.

14 (The hearing concluded at 6:51 p.m.)
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2 STATE OF NEW YORK

3 I, ANTHONY MCCLAIN, do hereby certify that the foregoing
4 was reported by me, in the cause, at the time and place,
5 as stated in the caption hereto, at Page 1 hereof; that
6 the foregoing typewritten transcription consisting of
7 pages 1 through 37, is a true record of all proceedings
8 had at the hearing.

9 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
10 subscribed my name, this the 8th day of August, 2023.

11
12 ANTHONY MCCLAIN, Reporter

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